

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 97

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the arrests of Cuban democracy activists by the Cuban Government.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25, 2003

Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself and Mr. ALLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the arrests of Cuban democracy activists by the Cuban Government.

Whereas on March 18, 2003, Fidel Castro and the Government of Cuba began an island-wide campaign to arrest and jail dozens of prominent democracy activists and critics of the repressive regime;

Whereas since March 18, 2003, the Cuban police have arrested more than 100 Cubans for engaging in free speech under Law 88, the Law for the Protection of National Independence and the Economy of Cuba, which is a notorious law passed 3 years ago by the communist county;

Whereas the imprisoned political opponents of Castro include librarians, journalists, and others who have supported the Varela Project, which seeks to bring free speech, open elections, and democracy to the island nation;

Whereas Fidel Castro has seized the opportunity to expand his brutal oppression of the Cuban people while the attention of the United States and other nations around the world is focused on the war in Iraq; and

Whereas the failure to condemn the Cuban Government's renewed political repression of democracy activists will undermine the opportunity for freedom on the Island: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) condemns the recent arrests and other in-
3 timidation tactics against democracy activists by the
4 Castro regime;

5 (2) calls on the Cuban Government to imme-
6 diately release those imprisoned and held during this
7 most recent crackdown for activities the government
8 wrongly deems “subversive, counter-revolutionary,
9 and provocative”;

10 (3) reaffirms Senate Resolution 272, 107th
11 Congress, agreed to June 10, 2002, which was
12 agreed to without opposition and which called for,
13 among other things, amnesty for all political pris-
14 oners;

15 (4) praises the bravery of those Cubans who,
16 because they practiced free speech and signed the
17 Varela Project petition, have been targeted in this
18 most recent government crackdown; and

- 1 (5) urges the President to demand the imme-
- 2 diate release of these prisoners and to take all ap-
- 3 propriate steps to secure their immediate release.

